

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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## DR. WALLACE MERWIN IN JAPAN

The General Secretary for the Far East of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America, Dr. Wallace C. Merwin, is due in Japan Sept. 17 on his way to a church conference in Hong Kong. While here he will contact the NCC during an 8-day stay from Sept. 22-30. He will be in Okinawa from Sept. 30-Oct. 7, and will leave for the U.S. Oct. 9.







WHITE PAPER ON MISSION OF THE CHURCH RELEASED

As background information for laymen and Pastors, and in preparation for the four simultaneous conferences Sept. 23 and 24 on "The Mission of the Church", the United Church of Christ has just released a pamphlet which includes the latest statistics of the church, compiled at the end of March, 1957. These have been compiled and edited by the Committee on Centennial Evangelism of the United Church.

Membership of the United Church is 172,166 - while that of the many other Protestant groups in Japan is believed to be 125,089, or a total of 297,255 - just a shade under 300,000. Catholics are listed at 261,448, making a total of all Christians in Japan of 558,703. Adult baptisms in the past three years were 25,217, which comprises 23% of the present communicants. When deaths and erasures are deducted, the actual increase in those three years was 13,348, or a yearly average of 4,416.

Number of United Church affiliated churches is listed at 1,528, and the number of ministers, 2,090. First class churches (full economic self-support) number 713, second class churches (receiving some aid) number 504, and preaching points number 311. There has been a 6% increase in the total number of churches and preaching points during the past three years, or a yearly average increase of 2%. The oldest church is 84 years old, the average is 28 and a half. 56% of the present churches were founded prior to 1945, while those founded since 1946 comprise 44% of the total. In other words, over 40% of the churches of the United Church of Christ in Japan are less than 12 years old.

Financially, the yearly budget of the United Church runs around 400 million Yen (\$1,108,000), including the churches, the district Kyoku's or Synods, and the United Church Headquarters. Aid received from abroad accounts for only 15% of this whole amount. For instance, income received in Japan in 1956 for operating expense of the entire United Church program (Churches, Synods, Headquarters) was 310 million Yen, while expenditures amounted to 279 million Yen.

LABOR SUNDAY OBSERVED IN JAPAN

The custom of observing labor Sunday is new in Japan, having just been instituted by the Standing Executive Committee three short years ago. But much new interest in winning the laboring man to the church is in evidence everywhere. This year the Occupational Evangelism Committee of the United Church sent a special labor day message together with a large poster to all the parishes of the United Church, to be followed by a program of intensive evangelism at some 37 "centers" throughout the country, in a kind of Crusade to the working man, as part of the Centennial Evangelism program.







### FORMER TOKYO UNION CHURCH PASTOR WRITES FROM NEW YORK

"I am willing to confess that I am homesick for Japan and especially for Union Church", wrote the Rev. Galen Russell from New York City where he has just returned after serving the Tokyo Church as Pastor since 1954. Of particular interest is also his comments about the Billy Graham meetings in New York, two of which he attended. Writing about the second one, the huge open air meeting in Times Square, he said "it was wonderful!" To be a part of that crowd saying the Lord's Prayer on Broadway and singing "All Hail the Power of Jesus Name" with thousands of others is a tremendous experience. To top it off "Billy" preached a good sermon. I would be critical of this spectacular work if it were not for the splendid follow-up work which has been arranged. The churches are working together through the Protestant Council. In October there will be a large visitation evangelism effort to call on all the people who have made decisions this summer. Other names will be added to the "responsibility list". Then this organized calling will be climaxed with a single mass meeting with Billy Graham at the Polo Grounds. I am so enthusiastic about this effort that I went over to Dr. Bader's office the other day and offered my services as a Volunteer. May I suggest that you might ask the readers of the Christian Activity News to include this visitation effort on their prayer list. I believe that this work is of God and that it is strategic for this hour."

### WOMEN OF JAPAN HELP HUNGARIAN REFUGEES

The Women's Committee of the National Christian Council of Japan recently sent to the World Council of Churches, through the Interboard Committee in New York a donation of \$1,000 for Hungarian Refugees. This is a part of contributions received at services observing the World Day of Prayer in churches throughout the nation last spring.

### GAP BETWEEN JAPANESE AND AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING OF GIRARD CASE

The General Secretary of the Audio-Visual Aids Commission of the NCC, Mr. Kiyoshi Ogawa, just back from an international visual aids conference in Europe, and a subsequent visit to the United States, said upon his return to Japan that reports on the controversial Girard case published in America are in general opposite to those published in Japan. He went on, however, to say that despite this there are only a few in the United States who have any antipathy toward Japan. Almost without exception he said, "all those who have been to Japan since the war are friendly to her". Mr. Ogawa said that he was amazed by two other things, first to find that a Japanese restaurant in New York City was filled with American customers, and secondly, and very regretfully, to find that there were "not a few" who became "pop-eyed" to learn that there is a ready supply of electricity throughout Japan.







### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION WEEK BEGINS

With the motto "Christ is Truth" the annual observance of Christian Education Week in Japan this year will center around plans for the World Sunday School Convention to be held in Japan next summer. Participating in lecture meetings, teachers' meetings, and joint teacher-pupil conferences will be the church school department of the NCC, the Education Association of Christian Schools, the Christian Federation of Childhood Education, and other groups related to nurseries, kindergartens, and church schools throughout Japan. On Sunday Sept. 15 all Sunday School members will be encouraged to make a special contribution toward the ¥7,500,000 which Christian circles have pledged to raise to underwrite the expenses of the world Convention.

### KOREAN WOMEN IN JAPAN TOUR HOMELAND

Forty five Korean Christian women, now residing in Japan, and representing some 35 Korean churches located throughout the country, are on a goodwill tour of their homeland "to tell Korean Christians about the actual conditions of churches in Japan, and to convey the goodwill of Japanese Christians". The Korean Church in Japan is a member body of the National Christian Council, and the women carried with them to Korea a gift of some ¥120,000 (\$332), a love gift from the Women's Division of the NCC. It is estimated that between 700,000 and 1,000,000 Koreans are presently residing in Japan.

### A NEW BIOGRAPHY OF DR. KAGAWA

Mrs. John Fletcher, poet, and American delegate to the recent international PEN conference held in Tokyo, is currently doing research while in Japan on a biography of Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa, the famous Evangelist-Social Worker. Dr. Kagawa is a current candidate for the Nobel prize.

### STONE MEMORIAL CENTER PLANNED

A memorial center will be built in Japan in honor of the late Rev. A. R. Stone, Canadian Missionary, whose untimely death occurred in the Toya Maru ferry boat sinking in Hokkaido in Sept. 1954. The Rev. Mr. Stone, who came to Japan in 1926, was very active in the field of rural evangelism and was at the time of his death on his way to a meeting of the Cooperative Evangelism Committee of the United Church of Christ. With the object of recognizing the faith and virtue of the late minister, and of expressing appreciation for his long years of service on behalf of rural evangelism in Japan, the Standing Executive Committee of the United Church on Sept. 2 decided to proceed with the project, and appointed a committee of 5 Japanese church leaders and 4 missionaries to carry it out. An overseas contribution of some 4,000,000 Yen (\$11,080) will be added to funds to be raised in Japan.







### JAPAN HELPS LEPERS IN KOREA

According to the Christian Press (Tsushin) of Sept. 4 it is estimated that there are about 750,000 lepers in Korea. Recently, the Japan Society for the Salvation of Lepers (Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa, President) has been sending medicines to them as an expression of Christian love and concern on the part of their Japanese brothers.

### NCC HOLDS EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

On Sept. 4-6 about 100 delegates of the member bodies of the National Christian Council (The United Church of Christ in Japan, the Anglican Episcopal Church in Japan, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Japan Baptist Convention, the Korean Church in Japan) met to discuss results of the past 100 years of evangelism in Japan, how to properly commemorate the occasion in 1959, and strategy for the next century. Also debated was how to make more efficient use of three main departments of the NCC, the Literature Department, Church School Department, and AVACO (audio-visual aids commission) by the member bodies of the NCC. How to enter more deeply into the field of radio evangelism, exploration of the feasibility of having a common hymnal for all groups of the NCC, producing literature of such theological tone as to be usable by all the groups of the NCC, and securing broad participation on the local level of all churches and church schools of NCC related groups in preparing for the World Sunday School Convention in Japan next year occupied most of the discussion time of the conference. A definite growing sense of unity in the common task of evangelizing Japan was very evident throughout the discussions, so much so that this type of exploratory conference was requested for each year. Voiced again was the feeling that more and more evangelism in Japan should depend less and less upon foreign friends and foreign aid, and that men and resources of the indigenous church should be mustered and developed for the task. Discussion leaders included Dr. Mikio Sumiya, Professor at Tokyo University, Bishop Yashiro of the Episcopal church in Japan, Dr. Enkichi Kan of St. Paul's University, the Rev. Kiyoshi Hirai, Executive Sec'y of the NCC. Delegates included 33 from the United Church, 12 from the Episcopal, 12 from the Lutheran, 10 from the Baptist, 1 from the YMCA, 2 from the Korean Church in Japan, 14 from the NCC staff and departments, and 9 observers, including 6 missionaries.







Agreement formally reached at the conference follows: "Our churches should be united in order to respond effectively to the call of missions in this impending time of crisis. We believe that it is God's will that leaders of the affiliated bodies responsible for evangelism have come together here under the auspices of the National Christian Council to discuss the matter of "unity in missions" at this particular time. It is a matter for rejoicing that here we have deepened our understanding of one another and have had fellowship with our Lord together, which has undoubtedly paved the way for an advance in evangelism here in Japan. In view of the highly successful results of this meeting, it is urged that we hold this kind of conference annually for the sake of evangelism in Japan".

#### JAPAN CHURCH WORLD SERVICE COMMENDED BY LABOR MINISTRY

At the Kanda Kyoritsu Auditorium in Tokyo JCWS was officially commended by the national Ministry of Labor for its services on behalf of the physically handicapped. JCWS participated in "Vocational Rehabilitation for the Physically Disabled Week" by holding a camp on the seashore for polio victims, and has a separate continuing program of assistance to those handicapped by various physical disabilities. The Rev. Hallam Shorrock, Director, and Miss Yoko Kojima, Case Worker, were present to represent Japan Church World Service.

#### THE REV. MOTOI MUNAKATA TO LEAVE FOR BRAZIL

The first Pastor ever to be dispatched to South America from the United Church of Christ in Japan, the Rev. Motoi Munakata, 32, his wife, and two children, will sail aboard the Dutch ship, the Chisadene, Oct. 10. Born of a Japanese Christian family on Formosa, he was baptized before entering the Tokyo Naval College, and served as a Naval officer during the war. After the war he found a new way of life, studied for the ministry, and has been Pastor of the Gyuda Church in Hiroshima.

#### TRAINING CLASS FOR NURSES HELD AT BOTT MEMORIAL CENTER

19 young ladies preparing for nursing service in social institutions received special training in nursing and social work at the Bott Memorial Center, rotating for 5 days in homes connected with the Center in which they received additional training in child care. The course was 4 weeks, during which time they had opportunity to observe social work projects in the Tokyo area and hear lectures by representatives from the Protection Bureau for Children of the Health and Welfare Ministry and from the Salvation Army.







### JAPANESE WOMEN OF LONDON HELP KYUSHU FLOOD VICTIMS

The London YWCA has a Japanese department, headed by Mrs. Nishi, wife of the Japanese Ambassador, and Miss Hanako Watanabe, former Tokyo YWCA committee member. A ¥5,000 check was recently received from this chapter by the Japan YWCA for relief work to the Kyushu flood victims.

### NEW SALVATION ARMY LEADER WELCOMED

Captain and Mrs. William Banks have just arrived in Japan from the Salvation Army International Headquarters in England for missionary service here. They were honored at a welcome party by the Japan Salvation Army, and at the same party Lt. Colonel and Mrs. Arthur Long were welcomed back to Japan after a year's furlough in Canada (Mrs. Long is Canadian). Territorial Commander for the Japan area is Lt. Commissioner Charles Davidson of Scotland. Seven men and seven women cadets who are currently in training at the Salvation Army school in Tokyo were also honored at the party for the Banks and the Longs. More than 200 others officers are out on the field in various areas of Japan.

### "WORLD VISION" DELEGATION COMING TO JAPAN

A five-man party of "World Vision Incorporated", an inter-denominational organization affiliated with some fifty church bodies, and headed by the president, the Rev. Bob Pierce, it is reported, will be in Tokyo Sept. 26 and 27 to hold an inter-denominational conference at Tokyo Chapel Center. It is expected that the group will report on the Billy Graham campaign in New York. The party will also have an interview with Prime Minister Kishi while here, through the introduction of Dr. Masatoshi Matsushita, President of St. Paul's University in Tokyo. Included among the members of the five-man party are Bishop Theophilus of the Mar Thoma Church in India, and Bishop Sobrepena of the United Church of the Philippines and President of the East Asia Christian Conference.

### MANY BIBLES DISTRIBUTED IN JAPAN

At a recent Retreat for Colporteurs of the Japan Bible Society it was announced that as of the current date (Sept. 10) Bible distribution has reached the 1,830,000 mark for the fiscal year.







LACOUR SPECIAL EVANGELISM RESULTS

30 ministers (including a few wives) completed two months of intensive evangelistic activity under the leadership of the Rev. and Mrs. Lawrence LaCour, and the Rev. Chuzo Yamada, United Church Pastor (who took time off from his church to serve as over-all manager of the campaign) and left Tokyo International Airport for home on Aug. 28. Over 200 leaders of both the United Church and the National Christian Council gathered to hear summary reports and to express their appreciation to these ministers who left home and vacation behind and dedicated their efforts during the hottest two months in Japan to promote the cause of Christian evangelism. 23 centers were manned this summer with an American Japanese Pastor team, and total attendance was said to exceed 13,000, of whom 94 were actually baptized. In addition 80 more now studying Christianity will probably be baptized at Christmas. 636 others have signed cards expressing interest in Christianity, and are prospects for future follow-up work. Largest congregation of the 23 centers is 67, while the average is 32. Total membership of the centers at the end of June was 636, and this grew to 744 by the time the American Pastors left Japan. The Lacour Evangelism project was conceived when the Rev. LaCour was a Chaplain with the American Armed Forces here and became deeply interested and enthusiastic about Japan's evangelism. The goal is to have 25 or 30 new self-supporting churches by 1959, date of the Protestant Centennial in Japan. Several have already achieved the goal.



